IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claim 1 as follows:

1   1.(Currently amended)   A method for use in a recommender for

2   evaluating the closeness of two items, each of said items

3   characterized by at least one symbolic feature, said method

4   comprising the steps of:

5   computing a distance between corresponding symbolic feature

6   values of said two items based on an overall similarity of

7   classification of all instances for each possible value of said

8   symbolic feature values; and

9   aggregating the distances between each of said symbolic

10   features values to determine the closeness of said two items.

1   2.(Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein said computing

2   step employs a Value Difference Metric (VDM) technique to compute

3   said distance between symbolic features.

1   3.(Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein said computing

2   step employs a modified Value Difference Metric (MVDM) technique to

3   compute said distance between symbolic features.

1   1.   4.(Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein said

2   distance, δ, between two values, V1 and V2, for a specific symbolic

3   feature is given by:

4            $\delta(V1, V2) = \sum |\ C1i/C1 - C2i/C2\ |^r$

5   wherein C1i is the number of times V1 was classified into

6   class i and C1 is the total number of times V1 occurred in the data

7   set.

1   5.(Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein said items are

2   programs, classes of interest are "watched" and not-watched" and

3   wherein said distance, δ, between two values, V1 and V2, for a

4   specific symbolic feature is given by:

5    $$\delta(V1, V2) = \left| \frac{C1\_watched}{C1\_total} - \frac{C2\_watched}{C2\_total} \right| +$$

6    $$\left| \frac{C1\_not\_watched}{C1\_total} - \frac{C2\_not\_watched}{C2\_total} \right|$$

7   wherein C1i is the number of times V1 was classified into

8   class i and C1_total is the total number of times V1 occurred in

9   the data set.

1   6.(Original) The method of claim 1, wherein one of said items

2   is a cluster mean.

1   7.(Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said items are

2   programs.

1   8.(Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said items are

2   content.

1   9.(Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said items are

2   products.

1   10.(Original) A method for assigning an item to one or more

2   groups of items, each of said items characterized by at least one

3   symbolic feature, said method comprising the steps of:

4   computing a distance between corresponding symbolic feature

5   values of said item and at least one item in each of said groups,

6 said distance based on an overall similarity of classification of

7 all instances for each possible value of said symbolic feature

8 values;

9   aggregating the distances between each of said features values

10 to determine the closeness of said item and at least one item in

11 each of said groups; and

12   assigning said item to said group associated with a minimum

13 distance value.

1   11.(Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said computing

2 step employs a Value Difference Metric (VDM) technique to compute

3 said distance between symbolic features.

1   12.(Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said computing

2 step employs a modified Value Difference Metric (MVDM) technique to

3 compute said distance between symbolic features.

1   13.(Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said distance,

2 δ, between two values, V1 and V2, for a specific symbolic feature

3 is given by:

4          $\delta(V1, V2) = \sum |\; C1i/C1 - C2i/C2 |^r$

5   wherein C1i is the number of times V1 was classified into

6   class i and C1 is the total number of times V1 occurred in the data

7   set.

1   14.(Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said items are

2   programs, classes of interest are "watched" and not-watched" and

3   wherein said distance, δ, between two values, V1 and V2, for a

4   specific symbolic feature is given by:

5
$$\delta(V1,\ V2) = \left| \frac{C1\_watched}{C1\_total} - \frac{C2\_watched}{C2\_total} \right| +$$

6
$$\left| \frac{C1\_not\_watched}{C1\_total} - \frac{C2\_not\_watched}{C2\_total} \right|$$

7   wherein C1i is the number of times V1 was classified into

8   class i and C1_total is the total number of times V1 occurred in

9   the data set.

1   15.(Original) The method of claim 10, wherein one of said

2   items is a cluster mean.

1   16.(Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said items are

2   programs.

1   17.(Original)   The method of claim 10, wherein said items are

2   content.

1   18.(Original)   The method of claim 10, wherein said items are

2   products.

1   19.(Original)   A system for use in a recommender for

2   evaluating the closeness of two items, each of said items

3   characterized by at least one symbolic feature, comprising:

4   a memory for storing computer readable code; and

5   a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor

6   configured to:

7   compute a distance between corresponding symbolic feature

8   values of said two items based on an overall similarity of

9   classification of all instances for each possible value of said

10   symbolic feature values; and

11   aggregate the distances between each of said symbolic features

12   values to determine the closeness of said two items.

1   20.(Original)   A system for use in a recommender for

2   evaluating the closeness of two items, each of said items

3 characterized by at least one symbolic feature, comprising:

4   means for computing a distance between corresponding symbolic

5 feature values of said two items based on an overall similarity of

6 classification of all instances for each possible value of said

7 symbolic feature values; and

8   means for aggregating the distances between each of said

9 symbolic features values to determine the closeness of said two

10 items.

1   21.(Original) An article of manufacture for use with a

2 recommender for evaluating the closeness of two items, each of said

3 items characterized by at least one symbolic feature, comprising:

4   a computer readable medium having computer readable code means

5 embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means

6 comprising:

7   a step to compute a distance between corresponding symbolic

8 feature values of said two items based on an overall similarity of

9 classification of all instances for each possible value of said

10 symbolic feature values; and

11   a step to aggregate the distances between each of said

12   symbolic features values to determine the closeness of said two

13   items.

1   22.(Original) A system for assigning an item to one or more

2   groups of items, each of said items characterized by at least one

3   symbolic feature, comprising:

4   a memory for storing computer readable code; and

5   a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor

6   configured to:

7   compute a distance between corresponding symbolic feature

8   values of said item and at least one item in each of said groups,

9   said distance based on an overall similarity of classification of

10   all instances for each possible value of said symbolic feature

11   values;

12   aggregate the distances between each of said features values

13   to determine the closeness of said item and at least one item in

14   each of said groups; and

15   assign said item to said group associated with a minimum

16   distance value.

1   23.(Original)   An article of manufacture for assigning an item

2   to one or more groups of items, each of said items characterized by

3   at least one symbolic feature, comprising:

4   a computer readable medium having computer readable code

5   means embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means

6   comprising:

7   a step to compute a distance between corresponding symbolic

8   feature values of said item and at least one item in each of said

9   groups, said distance based on an overall similarity of

10   classification of all instances for each possible value of said

11   symbolic feature values;

12   a step to aggregate the distances between each of said

13   features values to determine the closeness of said item and at

14   least one item in each of said groups; and

15   a step to assign said item to said group associated with a

16   minimum distance value.